



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Region 2 Headquarters
3201 Spurgin Road
Missoula, MT 59804
Phone 406-542-5500

March 14, 2018

Dear Interested Citizen:

Enclosed you will find for your review the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for a Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) proposal to acquire fee title to approximately 276 acres from Randy Koch, as an addition to FWP's 35,041-acre Fish Creek Wildlife Management Area (FCWMA), located south of Tarkio in Mineral County. The proposed acquisition property is composed of two private inholdings or adjacent parcels: the approximately 116-acre Whitehorse parcel (just west of Whitehorse Gulch, off West Fork Fish Creek) and the 160-acre Main Stem Fish Creek parcel. FWP's purpose for purchasing the land is to manage the important habitat (including 1.2 miles of riparian and fisheries habitat along Fish Creek) for deer, elk and other wildlife, and to prevent this habitat from potentially being developed or subdivided. Public access and recreational opportunities would be increased by managing the property as part of FCWMA.

FWP will hold a public hearing in Albion on March 22nd (Thursday) at 6:30 p.m. at the Albion Community Center (701 Railroad Ave) to discuss the proposed acquisition, answer questions, and take public comment.

The EA may be obtained by mail from Region 2 FWP, 3201 Spurgin Rd., Missoula 59804; by phoning 406-542-5540; by emailing shrose@mt.gov; or by viewing FWP's Internet website <http://fwp.mt.gov> ("Public Notices," beginning March 14).

Comments may be made on FWP's website (webpage above) or may be directed to Sharon Rose at the mail or email addresses above. Comments must be received by FWP no later than April 13, 2018.

As part of the decision making process under MEPA, I expect to issue the Decision Notice for this EA soon after the end of the comment period. The Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission has the final decision-making authority for FWP land acquisition proposals, and the Commission will be asked to render its decision on this proposal at its regularly scheduled meeting on June 14th in Helena. Approval will also be necessary from the Montana Board of Land Commissioners (tentatively scheduled for its June 18th meeting in Helena).

Sincerely,

Randy Arnold
Regional Supervisor

RA/sr